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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES.

Recognizing the importance and effectiveness of veteran-to-veteran
sponsorship programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GALLAGHER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the importance and effectiveness of veteran-to-
veteran sponsorship programs.

Whereas approximately 200,000 veterans discharge from the
military every year and experience difficulty transitioning
from active duty to civilian life;

Whereas the transition period for veterans is a time when de-
pression, isolation, post-traumatic stress disorder, suici-
dal ideations, and confusion can set in;

Whereas creating a peer-to-peer veteran relationship creates
an environment more conducive for a positive transition
from active duty to civilian life;

Whereas the ability for a veteran to discuss issues with another veteran has been proved to be more effective than conversations with civilians;

Whereas veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs can create a more welcoming community when a veteran returns home which would reduce the sense of isolation, loneliness, and confusion that comes with transitioning from the structure of active duty to the lack of structure in civilian life;

Whereas veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs are not an intervention, but a guiding hand that can assist veterans through the difficult times they go through when transitioning to civilian life that can lead to or exacerbate post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, or suicidal thoughts, a veteran helping another veteran through those issues will lead to healthy and positive lives;

Whereas adopting veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs in communities and programs of the Federal Government can aid in preventing mental, emotional, physical, and social issues for veterans struggling with transitioning from active duty to civilian life;

Whereas veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs have been promoted and established in communities in Northeastern Wisconsin, including different uses of veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs being used by various types of entities, including—

- (1) Brown County, Wisconsin, which offers one of the first veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs of its kind in the State, within the Northeast Wisconsin Battalion, called Bravo Company which assists veterans' transition to civilian life;

(2) La Crosse, Wisconsin, which offers a veteran-to-veteran mentor program which supports veterans who are experiencing legal, mental health, or emotional problems by assisting and encouraging their participation in programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, community-based treatments, and intervention programs, and navigating the court system if necessary;

(3) the Department of Veterans Affairs, which offers a transition specialist program, acknowledging the necessity of assisting veterans transition to civilian life;

(4) Outagamie County, Wisconsin, which is home to a veteran focused nonprofit, Veterans' Mentor Group, to support other veterans, recruit new veteran mentors, provide training and coordinate with the Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator, in addition to being a resource for other veterans from within the community who may find themselves in need;

(5) the military, which offers Transition Assistants Programs to assist veterans with the transition to civilian life;

(6) the University of Wisconsin System, which offers Vets for Vets, a student organization of veterans for veterans to assist with counseling and benefit information;

(7) the University of Wisconsin Madison, which offers Peer Advisory for Veteran Education (PAVE); and

(8) the Fox Valley Technical College, as well as many University of Wisconsin campuses, which offer Student Veterans of America Chapters which are student based mentoring programs;

Whereas the National Alliance on Mental Illnesses has recognized that veteran-to-veteran counseling increases self-esteem, social functioning, and life satisfaction;

Whereas the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs has recognized that veteran-to-veteran counseling improves social functioning, quality of life, independence, ability to deal with mental illness, access to benefits beyond the Department, communication skills, employment outcomes, and the effectiveness of the mental health delivery system;

Whereas the Veterans Health Administration has recognized that veteran-to-veteran counseling reduces usage of crises services, hospitalizations, loneliness, rejection, and discrimination; and

Whereas the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefit Administration strive to employ veterans to garner the benefits of veteran-to-veteran connections: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the importance, effectiveness,
3 and need for veteran-to-veteran sponsorship pro-
4 grams among existing programs and agencies of the
5 Federal Government; and

6 (2) encourages the use and practice of veteran-
7 to-veteran programs within the Federal Government
8 and Congress.